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XLII. Relations With the French Republic

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

(Dept. of State Bulletin, Vol. IV, No. 99, May 17, 1941)

The policy of this Government in its relations with the French Republic has been based upon the terms of the armistice between Germany and France and upon recognition of certain clear limitations imposed upon the French Government by this armistice. Furthermore, we have had assurances given by the head of the French State on behalf of his Government that it did not intend to agree to any collaboration with Germany which went beyond the requirements of that armistice agreement. This was the least that could be expected of a France which demanded respect for its integrity.

The people of France, who cherish still the ideals of liberty and free institutions and guard that love of these priceless possessions in their minds and hearts, can be counted on to hold out for these principles until the moment comes for their reestablishment. It is inconceivable they will willingly accept any agreement for so-called "collaboration" which will in reality imply their alliance with a military power whose central and fundamental policy calls for the utter destruction of liberty, freedom, and popular institutions everywhere.

The people of the United States can hardly believe that the present Government of France could

be brought to lend itself to a plan of voluntary alliance implied or otherwise which would apparently deliver up France and its Colonial Empire, including French African colonies and their Atlantic coasts, with the menace which that involves to the peace and safety of the Western Hemisphere.